AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Canceled)

2. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in Claim 8, wherein the predetermined criteria is a function of chrominance information of the block.

3. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in Claim 8, wherein the predetermined criteria is a function of contrast of the block.

4. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in Claim 8, wherein the predetermined criteria is a function of a level of detail within the block.

5. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in Claim 8, wherein the predetermined criteria is a function of a desired bit rate.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in Claim 8, wherein dividing further comprises separating the digital image into Y, C_b and C_r components, and decimating further comprises decimating one of the C_b and C_r components for the subset of the plurality of blocks.

8. (Previously Presented) A method of decimating a digital image being represented by a plurality of pixels, the method comprising:

dividing the digital image into a plurality of frames, each frame including a plurality of blocks, wherein each block of the plurality of blocks may be represented as a plurality of elements within a plurality of columns (m) and rows (n), where m and n are each two or more;

filtering each element of each column of each block, wherein for a given m^{th} column, weighting column m-1 25%, weighting column m 50%, and weighting column m+1 25%;

filtering each element of each row of the block, where given an n^{th} row, filtering further comprises weighting row n-1 25%, weighting row n 50%, and weighting row n+1 25%; and

decimating a subset of the plurality of blocks within a certain frame of the plurality of frames based upon predetermined criteria.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously Presented) The method as set forth in Claim 8, further comprising converting the digital image from pixel representation to frequency representation.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in Claim 18, wherein the predetermined criteria is a function of chrominance information of the block.

13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in Claim 18, wherein the predetermined criteria is a function of contrast of the block.

14. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in Claim 18, wherein the predetermined criteria is a function of a level of detail within the block.

15. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in Claim 18, wherein the predetermined criteria is a function of a desired bit rate.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in Claim 18, wherein the means for dividing further comprises means for separating the digital image into Y, C_b and C_r components, and the means for decimating further comprises means for decimating one of the C_b and C_r components for the subset of the plurality of blocks.

18. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for decimating a digital image being represented by a plurality of pixels, the apparatus comprising:

means for dividing the digital image into a plurality of frames, each frame including a plurality of blocks, wherein each block of the plurality of blocks may be represented as a plurality of elements within a plurality of columns (m) and rows (n), where m and n are each two or more;

means for filtering each element of each column of each block, wherein for a given m^{th} column, the means for filtering further comprises means for weighting column m-1 25%, column m 50%, and column m+1 25%;

means for filtering each element of each row of the block, where given an n^{th} row, means for filtering further comprises means for weighting row n-1 25%, row n 50%, and row n+1 25%; and

means for decimating a subset of the plurality of blocks within a certain frame of the plurality of frames based upon predetermined criteria.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Original) The apparatus as set forth in Claim 18, further comprising means for converting the digital image from pixel representation to frequency representation.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in Claim 28, wherein the predetermined criteria is a function of chrominance information of the block.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in Claim 28, wherein the predetermined criteria is a function of contrast of the block.

24. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in Claim 28, wherein the predetermined criteria is a function of a level of detail within the block.

25. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in Claim 28, wherein the predetermined criteria is a function of a desired bit rate.

26. (Canceled)

27. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in Claim 28, wherein the divider further comprises a separator, the separator configured to separate the digital image into Y, C_b and C_r components, and the decimator is further configured to decimate one of the C_b and C_r components for the subset of the plurality of blocks.

28. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for decimating a digital image being represented by a plurality of pixels, the method comprising:

a divider configured to divide the digital image into a plurality of frames, each frame including a plurality of blocks wherein each block of the plurality of blocks may be represented as a plurality of elements within a plurality of columns (m) and rows (n), where m and n are each two or more;

a filter configured to filter each element of each column of each block, wherein for a given m^{th} column, the filter further comprises a weighter configured to weight column m-1 25%,

column *m* 50%, and column *m*+1 25%, and further configured to filter each element of each row of the block, where given an n^{th} row, the weighter is further configured to weight row *n*-1 25%, row *n* 50%, and row *n*+1 25%; and

a decimator configured to decimate a subset of the plurality of blocks within a certain frame of the plurality of frames based upon predetermined criteria.

29. (Canceled)

30. (Previously Presented) The apparatus as set forth in Claim 28, further comprising a converter configured to convert the digital image from pixel representation to frequency representation.

31-35. (Canceled)

36. (New) A computer program product for causing a computer to decimate a digital image being represented by a plurality of pixels, comprising:

a computer-readable medium comprising:

code for causing the computer to divide the digital image into a plurality of frames, each frame including a plurality of blocks, wherein each block of the plurality of blocks may be represented as a plurality of elements within a plurality of columns (m) and rows (n), where m and n are each two or more;

code for causing the computer to filter each element of each column of each block, wherein for a given mth column, weighting column m-1 25%, weighting column m 50%, and weighting column m+1 25%;

code for causing the computer to filter each element of each row of the block, where given an nth row, filtering further comprises weighting row n-1 25%, weighting row n 50%, and weighting row n+1 25%; and

code for causing the computer to decimate a subset of the plurality of blocks within a certain frame of the plurality of frames based upon predetermined criteria.

37. (New) The computer program product of Claim 36, wherein the predetermined criteria is a function of one of chrominance information of the block, contrast of the block, a level of detail within the block, and a desired bit rate.

38. (New) The computer program product of Claim 36, wherein the code for causing the computer to divide the digital image further comprises code for causing the computer to separate the digital image into Y, C_b and C_r components; and

wherein the code for causing the computer to decimate further comprises code for causing the computer to decimate one of the C_b and C_r components for the subset of the plurality of blocks.

39. (New) The computer program product of Claim 36, wherein the computer-readable medium further comprises code for causing the computer to convert the digital image from pixel representation to frequency representation.